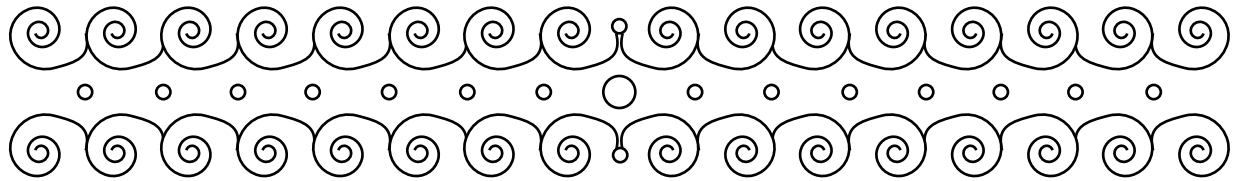


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Working with Dryads

by Eliza Fegley



Dryads

My first remembered experience with the Dryads was back when I was 15 years old, over ten years ago. Since my mother and I lived on the farm together and there were no neighbours in sight, I would often go to lie out skylad in a special part of the field that was closed in by tall thorn bushes and the forest trees. One hot summer morning, I went to this spot and laid out. After about 10 minutes of lying there, I felt as though someone or something was watching me. I had goosebumps all over and the hairs on the back of my neck just tingled. I looked up from half closed eyes into the woods before me and I thought I saw black wolves. I looked harder and there was nothing. So, I laid my head down for maybe another ten minutes and still I felt these eyes on me. By now I was completely spooked and I felt "otherworldish," as though I were awake within a dream. I looked up into the woods again... and there were all different sorts of magical peoples coming out from the trees and from the rocks. I was scared and quickly gathered up my robe and blanket to head back through the field and up closer to the house. I walked as though still in the dream. Field flowers became faces. Wherever I looked, people and faces were appearing out of nature. I made it back inside the fence, threw my blanket down and laid out once again. Feeling safe closer to the house, I laid there contemplating what I had just seen. I put my head down on the ground, my ear tickling from the scrunched grass beneath it and began to hear a whispering. At first I couldn't understand it but gradually I fell into a trance-like state and listened. It wasn't until 8 o'clock at night that I came stumbling into the house again, feeling tired and dreamy.

I still see the Dryads in my daily life, when I least expect it. For the most part, we nod to each other respectfully and go about our chores. Sometimes I go into the woods and leave offerings for them or I sit and listen to their songs on cool early autumn nights.

I'm in a writing mood tonight so I will try and remember and record all the rituals and work that I've done with the Dryads for the past ten years.

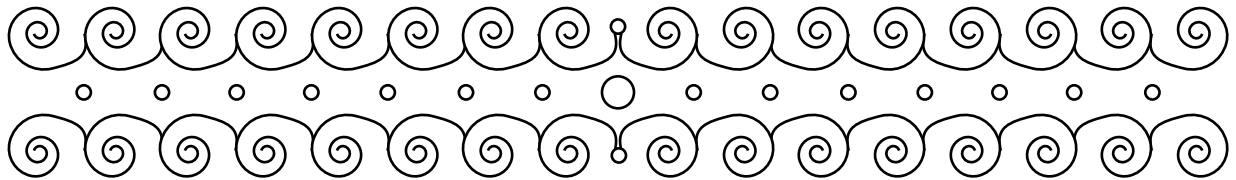
Background of Dryads

The Greeks believed that every tree had an elemental soul to go with it. In most cultures, the Dryads were always female. They are the nymphs of the forests and trees. They are the life and magic of the tree in which they live. When the tree dies, the Dryad dies with it.

Dryads are known to bring harm or to curse those who harm her tree, making it wise to give thanks and to leave an offering when taking a branch or twig or leaf from a tree.

They are said to especially live in willow trees but from my experience, there is a Dryad in nearly every tree. Most go unseen by us because we are not in tune with Nature and, often times, we simply do not believe.

Druids are said to have learned much from the Dryads on the magic of trees. They give the gift of prophesy and the gift of oracles. It is also said that they will heal the sick when approached respectfully.



Offerings

Always be respectful when working with elemental energies such as the Dryads. Give thanks verbally, hug the tree, or simply kiss its bark. Trinkets are appreciated but not necessary. Acts of kindness and genuine love for the tree and the soul that lives within it means so much more.

Trinkets can be left at the base of the tree. Iron nails, pretty glass marbles, a semi precious stone, a handmade wreath of grapevine, or a bunch of grapes can be left at the base. If you've wine, share it with the Dryad.

When you need to take some leaves or a twig or branch from the tree, first tell her what you are doing and why. If she approves, there will either be no reaction or you will feel it inside you that it is okay to proceed. If she disagrees with your taking, you will definately feel a tremour inside you. You might feel sick to your stomach all of a sudden. If this happens, you may either tell her that you understand and thank her for being open with you or, if the procedure is necessary, sit down with her and tell her why.

Dryads are not stubborn. Their arms bend with the wind. She will meet you in the middle, she can compromise.

The Dryad's Song

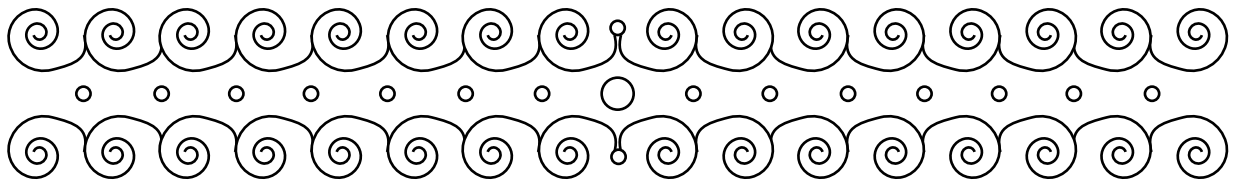
The song of the Dryad is the rustle of her leaves. Her song can soothe and it can also raise extremely strong energies.

For relaxation and getting rid of worries and stress, go sit beneath a spirited tree. With your back and head resting against her body, close your eyes and listen to her song. When you are in a meditative or trance state, imagine raising your arms out and up to the gentle winds. Feel the breeze flow through and around them. Feel the sway, the tug and pull. Remain this way for as long as you are comfortable. Know that the Dryad's arms are around you and that she is swaying with you, soothing you. When you are finished, a simple thank-you and a smile from the heart is all that she needs.

Dryads want to share their experiences with us. They cry out to us all the time and, mostly, we do not hear them. When you give the Dryad attention, when you acknowledge her and show your respect, she will show you all the wonders of Nature and the Elements.

She sings songs of the future and of the past. She is the giver of oracles. On breezy nights when you hear her song, simply close your eyes and listen. It doesn't matter if you are lying by your bedroom window or beneath her canopy. Her oracles are loud, wanting to be heard. Listen to the rustle. Let it lull you into a trance state and you will begin to hear her song. Just let the voice come, do not strain for it because then you will lose it. Like the breeze, it continues to move. You cannot grasp it for analyzing while it is happening, but you will know, in your deepest self, what she is singing.

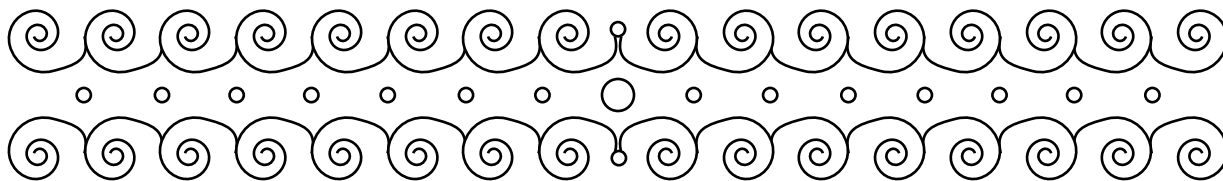
Dryads do not deceive those who respect them.



Sex and the Dryad

Unlike humans, dryads see nothing wrong nor unnatural with same sex partners nor opposite sex partners. Making love to a dryad is an event that only happens after a long relationship has been established. She will know when you are ready, and if she is willing, it will happen. This is not something that could ever be forced upon either you or her. Also, it is like nothing you have ever experienced on this plane. It is sensual and otherworldly and it is a complete surrender to each other.

The only thing I can suggest here is to build up a relationship with a particular Dryad. Respect and openness are the key words.



Oneness with With Your Chosen Tree

To experience unity and oneness with a particular tree and Dryad is exhilarating.

Stand before the tree and stretch out your arms. Your arms can be stretched out above you or out at your sides, whichever is most comfortable for you. Now close your eyes. Feel your feet growing roots, down into the ground. Your roots are meeting the roots of your chosen tree and yours and her roots are now intertwining. See and feel with your mind's eye both sets of roots mingling with each other. Feel the coolness of the earth.

From your roots, draw energy up through your legs and torso which are now becoming strong like the trunk of your chosen tree. You are growing tall. Feel the hardness and stiffness within your legs and torso. Feel the energy that is being gathered from your roots, go up your legs, up through your torso and now through your outstretched arms, your branches. Your arms, your branches, are growing out and mingling with the branches of your chosen tree. Feel the air move around your new branches, feel the sway. Spread open your fingers and feel the air between them. Feel the energy from your roots go up and go into your fingers. The energy is the energy of growth and life.

Now tilt your head up. Feel the warmth of the sun or the coolness of the moon upon it. We don't bring energy up from the roots to this part, instead we gather the energy from the air and sky above us and channel it downwards, towards our roots.

Stay like this for as long as you are comfortable. Feel the energies just flowing through your body.

To bring this exercise to a close, feel the earth energy leaving your fingertips and going down your torso and down through your legs. Take it down to your roots which are intertwined with the roots of your chosen tree. Feel your roots receding, going back up into your feet. As they do this, the energy that was gathered is now leaving your roots and encircling the roots of your chosen tree. Feel your roots shrink and begin to feel your feet on the earth again, no longer rooted. Your body is shrinking back to its normal size. Your branches are arms once again. Your face upturned is slowly stopping the downward channel of energy which is now going down to your feet and into the ground where you stand. More energy for your chosen tree. Bring your head down to face your chosen tree once more.

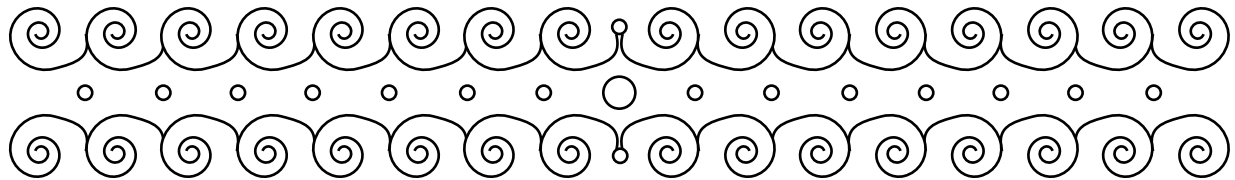
Baby Blessings

Neither my sister nor I were ever baptised. A few years ago, I was discussing this with my mother and she told me that shortly after I was born, she took me outside and baptised me to the trees. Sadly, she doesn't remember the words she used as they came from deep within her.

Since then, I have baptised or blessed both Claudia and Julian out under the three willow trees at the farm. Both times it was after a summer's rain. I carried them down to the third willow and said something along the lines of:

"Willow, open my child's eyes to the world around her.
Bless her on her path."

And then I touched their foreheads with a willow leaf that had a rain drop on it. Each babe was blessed with willow water.



Children and Dryads

When encouraged, children will develop strong relationships with certain trees. There will also be trees that they will stay away from. Never force a child to work with a tree s/he feels uncomfortable with.

The majority of Dryads love children and will allow children to use their leaves and branches at will. She, the dryad, will often bless the child in her own way and an observant parent can help the established relationship between a child and dryad grow into a healthy relationship.

Encourage your child to leave little bread offerings at the trunk of his or her chosen tree.

Show your child how to make flower garlands and vine wreaths to decorate the chosen tree.

When your child is upset or angry but does not want to talk to a parent or an adult at the moment, tell the child to go under the chosen tree and talk to the woman who lives in the tree. Tell them that she will listen to their problems and help guide them.

Teach your child to respect the tree and the spirit that lives within it. This may take time but the Dryad is patient and will continue to be patient as the child learns from his or her caregiver that respect is important when working with trees. Teach the child to give thanks when using her branches and leaves.

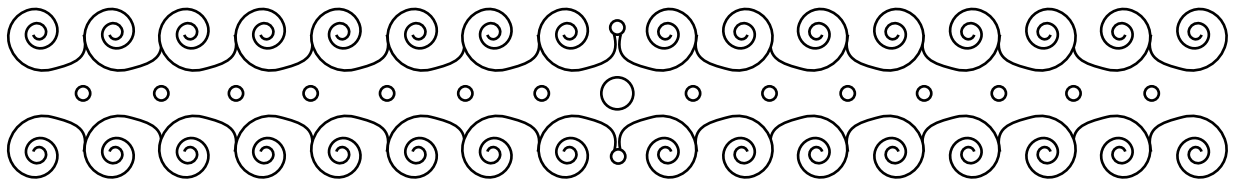
Healing

Dryads can help heal and soothe pain. To begin this process, lie flat upon the ground beneath your chosen tree or with your back and head against her body. Relax and listen to the rustle of her leaves. If you are lying flat on the ground, feel the Dryad's arms holding you, like a babe, gently rocking you. If you are with your back and head to her body, feel her reaching around, holding you. Feel her rock and sway you.

As you feel this, imagine yourself as a small tree with many leaves. Some are dark green and healthy and a few are yellow. With each sway and breeze, see the yellow diseased leaves falling off of you. With each sway, with each breeze, another yellow leaf falls. When there are no yellow leaves left, look closer at your small tree self. Look to the small branches and see the light green of new healthy leaves starting.

Feel yourself being swayed and rocked again. It slows down and eventually stops.

Thank the Dryad for her nurturance and healing.



Talking to Dryads

Talking to Dryads is one way to begin establishing a relationship with them.

Look to the trees that are around you. The one that sticks out the most or the one that seems shyest is always a good starting place. I've found that sitting with legs crossed in front of the tree's trunk with my forehead against the bark is an excellent way to begin discussion. Tell her about the day's events, share a memory or two, just let all your feelings and thoughts pour out to her. When you are finished, thank her for listening.

Go back to that tree often and talk to the Dryad. As she gets to learn more about you, she will become more real and may eventually show herself to you.

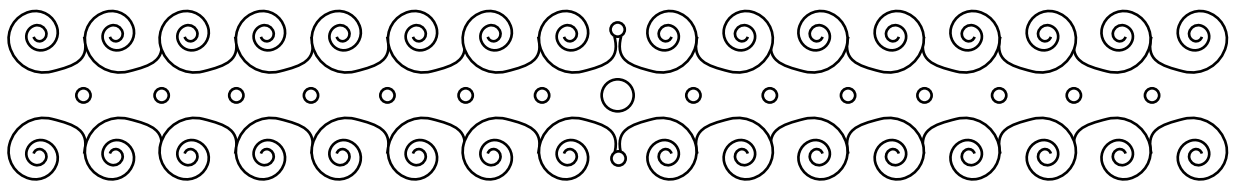
Never lie or try and deceive the Dryad. It is disrespectful and it will lose you her trust and friendship.

Releasing Anger

The Dryads are well aware and familiar with anger. Never be afraid to approach them and tell them about your anger. Whether it be for society or a spousal problem, they will listen and they will help you through the anger. Anger can be ugly, but like a weed, it can also be medicinal and it can even bloom into something constructive if channeled correctly.

Dryads can teach you how to channel those negative energies into something productive. First, you must tell them what has you angered and why it has you angered. After you have poured your heart out to the Dryad, sit back and just relax and contemplate a moment. Keep watch. She will show you the answer to your problem. She will show you the solution.

A Dryad will not magically make problems disappear. She will show you and tell you how to do this. It is up to you to take her well-given advice.



Calling a Dryad to a Tree

Dryads are elemental spirits that have taken up residence within a tree. They are energy within a tree that has taken form. When the tree dies, that energy is once again released. Most older trees have a Dryad living within it but often the younger trees do not. Trees bought from a nursery almost never have a dryad within them.

You can not force elemental energy to be trapped inside a tree. You have to call out and invite the energy. When you offer it a respected home, it will come and you will know it simply by looking at the tree. There will be a certain spark and feeling to a tree that has a Dryad living within it. It is what gives that tree an almost human quality.

You can invite a Dryad to your tree by simple means. Keeping the tree healthy is a must. A dryad will not come to a tree that is unhealthy.

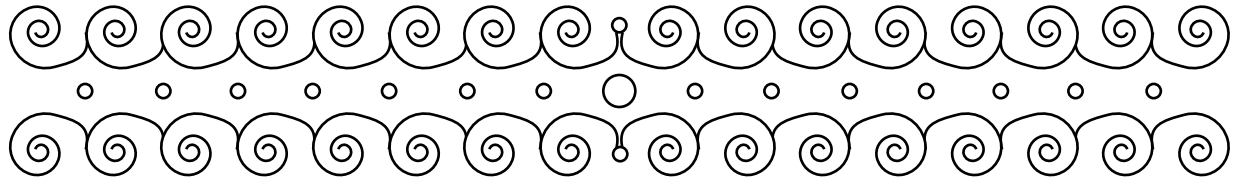
Create a wreath for the tree and set it down at its base. Wreaths can be made out of any vine and it needn't be elaborate. The wreath is a female yoni or birth symbol.

You can say something along the lines of:

"Element of Earth, I call you.
Element of Air, I call you.
Element of Fire, I call you.
Element of Water, I call you.
Combine and conjeal.
Bless this tree with life."

Surround the tree with white pebbles.

A tree spirit might not enter the tree right away but if the tree is kept healthy and is taken care of, a tree spirit will come.



Wishes

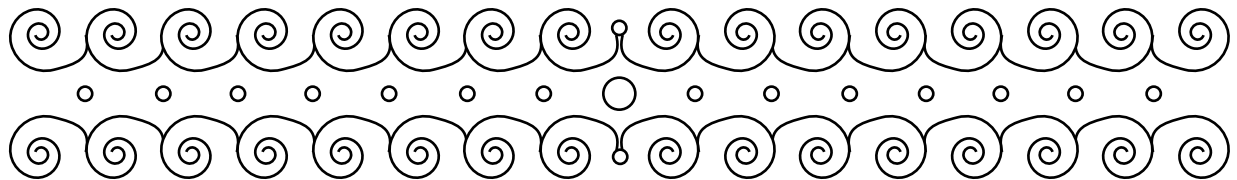
Dryads do NOT make wishes magically appear. Instead, they will listen to your well thought out wish and then present or show windows of opportunity to you to fulfill those wishes. Never carve your wish on the tree.

One way to present a wish to a Dryad is to take a small piece of quartz crystal to her along with an offering. Sit beneath her canopy and tell her what your wish is. Visualize it as you speak it. Then leave the crystal with her overnight in a place where you will be able to find it and leave her the offering you brought. Thank her and leave. Upon the next day, come back for the crystal, thank the Dryad once again, and carry the crystal on your person. She has programmed the crystal with her song to open your eyes to the windows of opportunity in fulfilling your wish.

Male Tree Spirits

Greeks believed that all Dryads are female. But this does not include all belief systems. Elemental energies are basically genderless and can form into either the male or female gender. Tree spirits can indeed be male. Often they are brotherly companions or guiding fathers, tall and sometimes stern yet loving.

Approach male tree spirits the same way as you would a Dryad, with respect and honesty.



Honesty

I mention honesty so often that I have to write a little of my thoughts on the matter.

Most of us, if not all of us, are blinded by society, by the way we are supposed to behave, supposed to dress, what we are supposed to do and learn. All these things that society expects from us further clouds us from our true inner selves and desires. We are afraid that by wanting something we are being greedy and we worry others might see that. We are ashamed that we want to be loved both physically and/or emotionally. Our bodies are sinful and are easily led to temptation. We are in constant denial of our true nature.

While working with and speaking to Dryads, you will begin to catch these illusions of the self. Simply by keeping honesty in mind, you will begin to catch the lies you tell yourself. Dryads illuminate and open the inner eye to the world around us. They clear the path for us as long as we, too, strive to seek the truth.